



Department for Public Health 9th Annual Commissioner Awards

The Department for Public Health held its ninth Annual Commissioner Awards ceremony on Nov. 1. Cabinet Secretary James Holsinger, M.D., was present to assist DPH Commissioner William Hacker, M.D. present the honors.

The Commissioner's Award winners included:

Individual Awards:

Program Support - for non-supervisory individual with outstanding performance in the area of improved work practices, exceptional cooperation or outstanding support.

Presented to Wendy Lohr, Division of Public Health Protection and Safety

Program Implementation – for non-supervisory individual with outstanding performance in the area of quality improvement and program/policy implementation.

Presented to Meloney Russell, Division of Laboratory Services

Program Leadership – for a supervisory/management individual making a significant contribution to quality improvement through excellence in communication, innovation, staff development and problem solving or management.

Presented to Brenda Chandler, Division of Adult and Child Health Improvement (ACHI)

Team Awards:

Within a Division – for a single or multidisciplinary group exhibiting a high level of coordinated effort and efficiency to achieve a common task or goal.

Presented to Laura Hilborn; Steve Salt; Gary Bevil; Jody Epperson; Shirley Herald; Mary Sanderson; Jennifer O'Brien; Amber Rodgers and Jeff Brock, Division of Epidemiology and Health Planning

Across Divisions – for a single or multidisciplinary group exhibiting a high level of coordinated effort and efficiency to achieve a common task or goal.

In a tie this year, in recognition of the tremendous amount of work these groups accomplished to get the expanded newborn screening program up and running, the award was presented to:

Newborn Screening Team: Division of Laboratory Services - Vera Foree; John Williams; Dana Adams; Judith Harrison; Susan Mitchell; Jeremy Hart; "Linnie" Linda Cameron; James Lim and Darrin Sevier; and Division of Adult and Child Health Improvement - Joyce Robl; Sandy Fawbush; Troi Cunningham and Mary Sue Flora

In recognition of the rapid response to and detection and treatment of an outbreak of Mycobacterium furunculosis infections among the manicure/pedicure salons in Kentucky, the "Nails" Team received special honors. The team includes, from the Division of Epidemiology, Kraig Humbaugh, Mike Auslander and Doug Thoroughman); from the Division of Public Health Protection and Safety, Clyde Bolton, Guy Delius, Colleen Kaelin and Anita Travis; and, from the Division of Laboratory Services, Stephanie Mayfield, Meloney Russell and Rhonda Lucas.

A reception was held following the awards ceremony.

Employee Recognition Month wrap up

In observance of Employee Recognition Month, the Office of Human Resource Management and the CHFS Employee Recognition Committee sponsored and coordinated special events throughout October. Although such activities traditionally have been planned during one week, the Cabinet decided to extend its observance.

Some of the special events and activities commemorating Employee Recognition Month 2005 included:

Employee Recognition Month Kick-off

Secretary Holsinger launched Employee Recognition Month by offering words of appreciation for CHFS employees. "I realize that only through the dedication of our employees will CHFS continue to be a leader in the



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delivery of health and human services,” Holsinger said. “Although I may not be able to personally visit every office or shake the hand of every employee, I would like each of you to know that you matter in a big way to this organization.”

Nutrition Day

Louisville’s Chef Nancy demonstrated how to prepare healthy snacks using fresh, locally grown produce and the winning entrée from the CHFS 5-A-Day Challenge recipe contest was featured as a CHR Café selection. Winners of door prize drawings were:



- Janet Bartley and Judy Montfort, who each received a copy of “You: The Owner’s Manual,” a national best seller by Michael F. Roizen, M.D. and Mehmet C. Oz, M.D; and
- Rosalie Summer, who received a copy of the American Heart Association’s “Low-Fat, Low-Cholesterol Cookbook.”

Wellness and Health Insurance Day

Representatives of Humana, the third-party administrator for the state employee health plan, were available to answer questions and various vendors, such as Curves for Women and the YMCA, provided health screenings and information on health and wellness issues. Prize drawings were held, too. Polly Boylett and Mary Manley were the winners of the book “90-Day Fitness Walking Program” by Mike Fenton; Lavona Fitzwater won a copy of Fenton’s “The Complete Guide to Walking” and Dana Pitcock won a free 30-day trial fitness membership to Curves. Paula Woodworth also won a cookbook from the American Heart Association.



Celebration of Employee Excellence

The month of October also featured an event that not only recognized employees, but also raised money for the Kentucky Employees



Charitable Campaign (KECC). The Employee Recognition Committee sold carnations of appreciation, flowers adorned with certificates of excellence, for workers to present to one another as a way to say “Good Job!” Proceeds of the carnation sale, \$800, were donated to KECC.

Office potluck meals

Various offices participated in potluck luncheons and planned other special activities to show appreciation for everyone’s hard work and to enjoy a time of fellowship with co-workers.



Planning and producing these events for CHFS staff required time and commitment on the part of several people. In the spirit of Employee Recognition Month, thanks to the following: Melissa Adkisson, Carolyn Barnes, Jan Beauchamp, Patricia Boler, Connie Bolin, Julie Brooks, Dorothy Brown, Eileen Cackowski, Alice Clark, Gloria Clark, Sylvia Coffey, Terri Cook, Michael Cornwall, Beth Crace, Dean Crawford, Fred Culbertson, Maranda Cummins, RaeAnne Davis, Latoya Fields, Vikki Franklin, Victoria Greenwell, Jennye Grider, Danelle Groves, Barb Hiller-Humana, Pat Hinson, Beth Holbrook, Secretary Holsinger, Marcia James, Joyce Jennings, Rita Jones, Linda Leber, Maggie Liford, Sarah Lyons, Martha Marlette- KY State University, Anna Marston, Robert Martin, Della Mazzoni, Becky McCoy, Joy Mills, Michelle Mitchell. Dawn Moreland, Amberlee Nickell, Beth Noe, Milly Noonan, Anne Parr, Jill Pfankuch, Chef Nancy Raussman, Brenda Sandy, MyLinda Sims, Roger Smiley, Greg Statterly, Susan Templeton- KY State University, Wes Swarner, Mike Vaughn, Lisa Wallace, Bobbie Walters, Anya Weber and Dawn Williams.

Employee Recognition: Children and Family Services, continued, and Health

Department of Community Based Services

Jay Tomlian and Kivvi Figgs, Bluegrass/Fayette Region

Jay Tomlian’s hard work and dedication on the job are worthy of commendation and appreciation, according to Carla Tackett, family service office supervisor and local social service partners. Tomlian is a social worker at the Bluegrass/Fayette regional DCBS office.. Blanton also asked that Kivvi Figgs, social service clinician be

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recognized in this feature for her unwavering social work skills and willingness to undertake any task.

Blanton said many cases assigned to Figgs are among the most challenging handled by that office, but, she said, Figgs “serves those families with respect and determination.” Figgs also is called on to help in situations that require additional support “and a fresh set of eyes,” Blanton added. “On those occasions, (Figgs) has taken the additional responsibilities, all the while maintaining a high level of job performance and a full caseload at work, going to school in pursuit of her master’s degree in social work and being a single parent.”

“It’s under such demanding conditions that staff needs and deserves added support and recognition for great service and to increase morale, Tackett said.

Charlene Keene, Big Sandy Region

Charlene Keene began her employment as a secretary with the Martin County family support office in 1997 and by 2003, she had risen through the ranks to the position of family support specialist.

According to Field Services Supervisor Kimberly Allen, Keene has always taken pride in her work and always goes that extra step to assist her clients and co-workers. “Charlene stays focused on her responsibilities and graciously volunteers wherever needed - assisting co-workers, answering phones and greeting visitors, assisting with community partners’ workshops or countless other tasks.”

Keene currently performs case work and has considerable experience in the adult medical program where she assists program staff regarding policies and procedures.

“She always keeps the safety and welfare of others a top priority,” Allen said. “Although she has struggles of her own, she continues to put others before herself and shows her appreciation and kindness to all.”

Lisa Forsyth, Big Sandy Region

Lisa Forsyth’s accomplishments and adherence to best practices have added to the success of the Pike County family support office, according to Irene Thacker, family support field services supervisor in Pike County.

Forsyth joined state government in 1987 as a caseworker and rapidly advanced to case manager. She was later promoted to case manager principal where she currently oversees the training and work of other case managers.

During her career with the Cabinet, Forsyth has served as a team facilitator, among other diverse duties. She is solely responsible for all the unemployed parent cases in Pike County in addition to a regular caseload. She also has led on-site training for Pike County case managers and eligibility staff supervisors in regional satellite offices.

Forsyth is credited with supervision of and developing learning tools for social work practicum students working at the office.

Health

Answering the call in the U.S. Gulf coast

Kentucky was among the first states to respond to the public health emergency declared in the impacted Gulf coast states following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Secretary Holsinger designated the Department for Public Health as the lead agency for Cabinet relief efforts and as CHFS representative with the Kentucky Emergency Operations Center (KyEOC).

The KyEOC relied on DPH and local health departments to help with the relief effort both at home and in the Gulf area. Through the public health system, DPH supported the EOC by vaccinating rescue and law enforcement personnel; manning phone banks to coordinate volunteers and donations of medical supplies and other aid; and coordinating deployment of mobile health clinics to the region.

At home, the Cabinet responded to the needs of displaced persons by providing health and safety monitoring at relief shelters; activating a registration system, KHELPS, to link evacuees with local services and dislocated family members; and recruiting medical volunteers for service at home and in the affected area. As a result, more than 1,400 health and medical professionals have registered to volunteer; temporary homes and needed services have been provided for evacuees in 94 Kentucky counties; more than 1,600 displaced persons have registered on the KHELPS Web-based registration system; at least 20 shelters were monitored; and health, education and social services were rapidly and effectively provided to those affected by the disasters.

As search and rescue activities transitioned into recovery operations, the DPH Preparedness Branch worked to place professionals in the area to help residents return to their homes, businesses reopen and health services resume. Forty-three Kentucky DPH staff in six strike teams have been deployed to Gulfport and Biloxi in Mississippi and logged more than 50 days of service and 31,000 man-hours in this effort.

These teams consisted of environmental inspectors who have conducted more than 230 food, school and food salvage inspections and delivered vaccines to local clinics and shelters.

Public health planners worked to enact plans to restore medical and dental services to a six-county area in southern Mississippi. One strike team included a Kentucky pharmacist who helped create a pharmacy recovery plan, conduct medical supply inventories and manage distribution of donated medicine and supplies.

DPH continues to support relief efforts in the area and help make displaced persons feel at home in Kentucky. Clyde Bolton, a member of one of the Kentucky strike teams, said, "The efforts of DPH, local health departments and the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet brought aid and comfort to the people of Mississippi, upholding the highest tradition of public health."

Award Recipients Recognized at 16th Mental Health Institute

At two special award luncheons, former acting Commissioner of the Department for Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services Rebecca J. Cecil presented two individuals and two programs with the Commissioner's Best Practice Award and one individual with the Margaret Pennington Award for Leadership and Vision. The luncheons took place Sept. 26-29, 2005 at the Galt House in Louisville during the 16th Mental Health Institute.

The awards celebrate this year's conference theme, "Partnering for Positive Outcomes: Implementing Best Practices." The Commissioner's Best Practice Awards recognize special individuals and programs that provide leadership in building resilience and facilitating recovery for people whose lives have been affected by mental illness, mental retardation or other developmental disability, substance abuse or an acquired brain injury. The Margaret Pennington Award for Vision and Leadership recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to mental health practice in Kentucky.

**NorthKey Community Care,
Youth Substance Abuse
Treatment Collaborative**
Commissioner's Best Practice
Award for Advocacy (Program)

The Youth Substance Abuse



Treatment Collaborative was created in April 2002 to address the lack of prevention and treatment options in Northern Kentucky. YSAT strives to provide a continuum of care for youth by advocacy efforts with the state legislature to bring about changes in Medicaid and the commercial health insurance system so more youth can receive much needed treatment. Community partners have improved networking to ensure that youth in need of services do not fall through the cracks. During its first two years of operation, YSAT increased the number of youth receiving substance abuse treatment by 77 percent. This worthy program is a model for the state.

Les Frasier, Supported Employment Specialist

Commissioner's Best
Practice Award for
Advocacy (Individual)

Les Frasier, Supported Employment Specialist with Seven Counties Services, has provided employment services to adults with severe mental illness for the past 15 years. Driven by the belief that adults with severe mental illness want to work and should be afforded the opportunity, Frasier has tirelessly advocated on behalf of individuals with severe mental illness to secure long-term competitive employment opportunities. His consistency and dedication provide hope and results.



Communicare Inc., Adult Crisis Stabilization Unit

Commissioner's Best Practice
Award for Service Delivery
(Program)

The history of program and reluctance of practitioners to accommodate the mental health needs of individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities is well known. Frequently, programs exclude individuals because of mental retardation. Against a historicalal context of great debate and, at times, acrimony, Communicare has determined that all consumers with a mental health diagnosis are eligible for all appropriate services, including individuals with MR/DD experiencing a crisis. Consumers are treated as individuals requiring assistance to return to their pre-crisis state. Communicare's ACSU recognizes that "consumers are not defined by their diagnoses and that each consumer is unique in his or her needs and ability to function." Truly, this program



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provides an example and a standard we hope all will embrace.

Carol Robertson, School-Based Therapist

Commissioner's Best
Practice Award for Service
Delivery (Individual)

Carol Robertson works as a school-based therapist in Clark County. In addition to providing excellent counseling skills and therapy, Robertson demonstrates an above-average commitment to students and their families by attending special education and parent-teacher meetings to help parents and students feel supported during educational planning. Robertson offers training in a variety of areas such as effective behavior management, psychological diagnoses, medication issues and special education law. She has worked to strengthen partnerships between the school system and community agencies and has expanded the array of available services by providing mental health supports to preschool students and their families. Robertson is a knowledgeable resource to educators and a mentor to other mental health professionals. Her dedication to her profession and her students is an inspiration to us all.



Daniel B. Howard

Margaret Pennington
Award for Vision and
Leadership

Dan Howard has been a tireless advocate in the field of mental health and mental retardation for more than five decades, lending his breadth of knowledge to make reforms for the betterment of all people both in the commonwealth and nationally. He was the author of the Kentucky legislation that created the Regional Mental Health-Mental Retardation Boards and established the largest system of behavioral health care in the commonwealth.



Howard came out of retirement to become executive director of the Kentucky Association of Regional Programs (KARP). As KARP's lead advocate, Howard has become one of the preeminent voices for behavioral health

services in the commonwealth and throughout the country. His working relationship with the citizens of Kentucky, legislators and governors, past and present, has given voice to the needs of the individuals we are all committed to serving. His vision and commitment to maintaining accessible, innovative, locally responsive services in a community-based setting have influenced public policy for 50 years. Above all, he has always been mindful that the needs of the individuals served are paramount.

This year, 1,025 professionals, consumers, administrators and family members attended the Mental Health Institute in Louisville.

Office of Human Resource Management uses Intranet as communication tool to serve its clients

In the Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM), the goal is to use the Intranet as the main communication medium between us and our clients.



OHRM's Intranet site contains information about each of its specific focus areas: employee management, personnel administration and training and organizational development. However, it also provides the following for everyone in CHFS:

- Personnel procedures/forms;
- Language access procedures for services to persons with limited English proficiency;
- Employee relations information;
- Employee recognition;
- Employee survey results;
- Employee suggestion instructions/winners; and
- Strategic planning guidelines.

CHFS celebrated Employee Recognition Month in October. Go to

<http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm/emprecognition.htm> to read about the activities that took place and watch the slide show of events from the month.

Take a break one day and peruse OHRM's section of the CHFS Intranet site at <http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm>.

OHRM staff is always interested in providing excellent customer service, so let one of the OHRM Intranet site

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editors know if you have any suggestions on how to make the site better.

This November, make the link between diabetes, heart disease and stroke

The Department of Public Health is using the month of November, which is recognized as National Diabetes Month, to educate people with diabetes about their risks – and how to reduce them.



When it comes to diabetes, heart disease and stroke, the statistics that link them are alarming. In Kentucky alone, more than 376,000 people are affected by diabetes.

One of the dangers faced by people with diabetes is heart disease, which strikes them more than twice as often as it strikes those without diabetes. It also hits them earlier in life, and in a more severe way. In fact, it is estimated that two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke.

One way for people with diabetes to reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke is to manage the ABCs of diabetes:

- A: Lower A1C, your average glucose (blood sugar) levels over three months, to less than 7.
- B: Keep blood pressure below 130/80.
- C: Get “bad” cholesterol (LDL) below 100.

There are more ways to help effectively manage diabetes. Even small changes can lower the risk of heart-related complications. Here are some suggestions:

- Keep blood glucose, cholesterol and blood pressure numbers as close to normal as possible.
- Get help to quit smoking.
- Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity, such as brisk walking, on most days of the week.
- Eat low-fat meals that include lots of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Ask your health care provider about taking medications to reduce heart attack or stroke.
- Work with your health care provider to determine your treatment options.

To help manage the ABCs of diabetes, the American Diabetes Association and the American College of Cardiology have created a free resource called “Choose to Live: Your Diabetes Survival Guide,” which features tools for people with diabetes to track key measures and goals, meal planning tips and practical advice for managing all aspects of diabetes care. For a free copy, call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES or send an e-mail request with your mailing address to AskADA@diabetes.org.

Diabetes-related information also can be obtained by calling the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program at (502) 564-7996 or visiting its Web site at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/ach/diabetes> or the National Diabetes Education Program site at www.ndep.nih.gov.

For more information, contact Linda Leber at the Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program at (502) 564-7996.

Notices to Frankfort staff include flu shot update, guidelines for posting information and carpet clean-up

- Cabinet employees in **Frankfort** will have several opportunities to receive **flu shots** in the next several weeks. Clinics will be offered at the employee health office on the first floor of the CHR Complex. Dates and times will be announced via e-mail and in future issues of the Focus.



- Finance would like to remind staff that notices cannot be posted in the elevators as such postings constitute a fire code violation.

When posting information around the building, staff should try to limit posting locations to the available bulletin boards as many employees are failing to remove tape from walls and other surfaces when taking down their posted notices and some types of tape cannot be easily removed and can damage paint. It is important to remove all notices after their expiration dates.

- Spills on carpet in the CHR Complex that cannot be cleaned up or may leave a stain should be reported to the building manager's office. Please provide the exact location of the spill so janitorial workers can address the issue.

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Jones Building renovation begins in the coming weeks

The Division of Facilities Management will soon be undertaking a renovation project at the Jones Building (located between CHR and COT).



The project will begin Nov. 14 with a lead paint abatement project that is expected to take about 90 days.

The contractor has requested a 100-foot clearance on the parking lot sides of the building during this phase of work, therefore, parking adjacent to the building will be restricted. Employees can expect areas to be blocked off to accommodate this work.

Adequate parking will be available in the main parking lot.

CHFS Health Tip of the Week: November is national epilepsy awareness month

By Anne Parr, R.N.

Epilepsy is a physical condition caused by sudden, brief changes in brain function called seizures.

Epilepsy affects individuals equally regardless of age, race, gender or national origin. More than 2 million people in the United States have epilepsy, making it the third most common neurological disease behind Alzheimer's and stroke.



Epilepsy is not a mental disorder. It can be caused by anything that affects the brain, including tumors and strokes. Sometimes epilepsy is inherited. Often no cause can be found. However, the greatest known cause is head injury followed by infection, tumors and strokes. Many diseases that affect the brain can also cause epilepsy. Doctors treat epilepsy primarily with seizure preventing medicines. Although seizure medications are not a cure, they help control seizures in the majority of people with epilepsy.

Epilepsy is what you have, not what you are. You are not an "epileptic." You are a person with epilepsy. Epilepsy is part of your life. It is not your whole life.

If epilepsy affects you or someone you know, and you have questions, please contact the Epilepsy Association, (800) 653-4300 or visit the Epilepsy Foundation at www.epilepsyfoundation.org.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber



Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.

One way to help teams perform to their highest potential, according to Max Messner's "Motivating Employees for Dummies," is to cultivate group chemistry. Chemistry is about the team caring about each other, looking out for each other and ultimately working well together.

Messner gives this example of how chemistry can be manifested: A family illness gives one employee a tough time and causes her to run late for work. She makes it in on time by skipping breakfast at home. A coworker notices and one morning leaves a big muffin at her desk.

You can't mandate chemistry; it comes naturally when team members truly want each other to be and perform well.

You don't have to be the team leader to set an example of caring for your coworkers. It typically becomes a natural response to look out for the people you spend so much of your time with. Good chemistry pays off not only with stronger work relationships, but also with more positive team results.